

proved decisions that can be explained and justified both internal to their organizations and externally to other organizations and the public.

Importantly, these SETAC and ISO clarifications should help make LCA a more credible environmental technique. For example, LCA will not be misrepresented as analyzing environmental *effects*, and the different technical difficulties will be more transparent to decision makers and other audiences. This should reduce the number of disputes over LCA interpretation and place behind us some of the debates of the last few years. At the same time, we should also recognize that both ISO and SETAC have reemphasized the core benefits of LCA that were never in dispute: 1) quantifying material and energy efficiency for a system, 2) identifying improvement opportunities and trade-offs, 3) illuminating hidden or unrecognized issues, and 4) promoting a wider and more rational communication among stakeholders about how to compare and improve highly complex and difficult to analyze industrial systems.

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Background Document for the Second Working Group on Life Cycle Impact Assessment of SETAC-Europe (WIA-2)

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